

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method for managing distribution and storage of content in a distributed system, including a satellite multicast Internet overlay, the Internet, LAN-situated caches, LANs, and/or single computer/device or single cache recipients, in which:

5 content is distributed to recipients as elected by one or more of the recipient, content originator, or another designated party given such responsibility, using meta-data (descriptive parameters) to index the content and other content-related system parameters for the purposes of notification, selection, distribution, and activity logging (including metered billing),

10 content destined for a plurality of recipients (for either simultaneous or non-simultaneous access) is multicast via satellite to LAN-situated caches or direct to end user applications,

cache-resident content is further managed for distribution within the enterprise – including on-demand access.

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2. The method of claim 1, in which the universe of users is aggregated onto the system advantageously (establishing a valuable neighborhood, or community of users) via a common geo-synchronous orbital location (or set of common orbital locations) from which content is relayed directly to downlink satellite antennas at
20 enterprise or other user locations all pointed to the common satellite orbital location(s).

3. The method of claim 1, in which the meta-data categories conform to one of several standardized templates.

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4. The method of claim 1, in which content for distribution is directed over the satellite multicast Internet overlay directly to LAN-situated caches or over the traditional Internet according to automated selection with objectives including delivery cost, quality, reliability, or latency.

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5. The method of claim 1, in which the satellite multicast Internet overlay involves standard satellite modulation and channel coding, and multimedia packaging

(source coding, data compression, packetization, etc.) such as defined in industry standards such as the set of Digital Video Broadcasting (DVB) standards.

5 6. The method of claim 1, in which content and/or meta-data is secured by encryption.

10 7. The method of claim 1, in which prospective content distributors view system schedules and availability as defined by meta-data templates through the system (delivered via the Internet or the satellite-multicast overlay or stored locally on a LAN-situated cache or single-computer hard disk).

15 8. The method of claim 1, in which content recipients are provided a selective view of content schedules according to a filter corresponding to the recipients identity and the positive association of such identity with any defined group selected by the content originator to have access to the schedule for certain content controlled by content originator.

20 9. The method of claim 1, in which content access is enabled according to free, pay-per-view, or subscription status, coincident with secure control to preclude unauthorized access to content, and coincident with distributed content management control signals used for conditional access, billing, etc.

25 10. The method of claim 1, in which content production and preparation tools produce such meta-data for distributed content management and delivery consistent with such meta-data templates or consistent with specific meta-data limits or objectives used to prescribe or control one or more of the parameters of the content being prepared.

30 11. The method of claim 1, in which certain content to be delivered is backhauled via dedicated or shared data circuits or the Internet to a centralized queue or multiplexer for combination with other content to be sent over the satellite multicast Internet overlay portion of the system.

12. The method of claim 11, in which the backhaul transmissions are included as controlled content management events by the distributed content management system.

13. The method of claim 1, in which content access rules for recipients and other system parameters are passed as supplementary such meta-data.

14. The method of claim 1, in which a software agent program at the recipient location is used to control management of content filtering from the satellite multicast Internet overlay or traditional Internet delivery paths as well as to manage local content access by the recipient (over the LAN or within the subsystems of a single computer system destination).

15. The method of claim 1, in which content guide software located within the enterprise or general user's location enables content schedule viewing, monitoring of local system use and status (including reporting to other elements of the distributed content management system), selection of content for viewing (including decryption), and enabling of other transactions associated with the system.

16. The method of claim 1, in which the multiplexing for satellite multicast Internet overlay delivery is optimized for efficient loading, considering factors such as size and nature of content, and timing requirements for delivery.

17. The method of claim 1, in which multiple modulated carriers sent over the satellite multicast Internet overlay are simultaneously received and processed for access.

18. The method of claim 1, in which meta-data is formatted for delivery in the format of XML or one of its implementations or derivatives.

19. The method of claim 1, in which service charges are collected for one or all of management of the system, access to system content, distribution of content over the system, and transactions (such as purchases of other products or services) relating to the operation of the system or resulting from use of the system.

20. The method of claim 1, in which users of the current satellite multicast to enterprise technology (e.g., and without exclusion, analog or digital business television satellite network users) are aggregated on traditional business terms (i.e., in advance of implementation of the other claims of the present invention) to expand the neighborhood
5 (as in claim 2) enabling upselling the traditional users into the more broadly functional system as it becomes available and accelerating the establishment of a valuable neighborhood by accelerating the number of downlink antennas pointed at the satellite, and thereby accelerating the prospects for early and wide adoption of the shared satellite network portion of a distributed content management system such as described in the
10 present invention.

21. The method of claim 1, in which use of the system is expanded by promoting the system functionality between business partners and the use of the system by businesses or other organizations that are content contributors who desire their
15 business partners to have access to their broadband multimedia content; and who consequently are incentivized to promote the use of the system by their business partners.

22. The method of claim 1, in which the service is marketed by co-branding between the distributed content delivery service brand and one or more or the users'
20 brands of users using the distributed content delivery service, including exploitation of acquired content brands.